

# WORKS

The Magazine of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO



Every Hour, Every  
Day, AFSCME Members Are

# Making America Happen.

SEE PAGE 10



05:AM

Columbus, Ohio.  
When the sun  
comes up,  
Stephanie Wiley  
has been up  
for a few hours  
already, prepping  
for three shifts  
throughout  
the day aiding  
students with  
special needs in  
Ohio. "Every day  
they count on  
me," says Wiley.

# AFSCME 24/7

American roads rarely close, so Rick Wiley, a highway worker in Waverly, Ks., is rarely off duty. "We're out here 24/7 in snow and ice to make sure the roads stay open," says Wiley.

Like Wiley, AFSCME members across the nation keep the country moving, from sunup to sundown and the over-night hours in between. In this issue, we're taking a look at what our sisters and brothers across the country do to make America happen. (p10) It's an inspiring reminder that even when we work the late shift alone, we're not really alone.

Unfortunately, not everyone has our backs. In Rhode Island, Michigan and too many other states, officials are worried about their corporate cronies more than American workers. (p22) So what do we do about that? Some of our youngest AFSCME members have an idea: PEOPLE power. (p24)

Around the clock, across the country, we are the Green Machine.



**Waverly, Kansas.** Rick Wiley is a highway worker, who works some of the more desolate stretches of road, ensuring they're maintained and safe. "The road system is vital to this state. Companies expect their products to arrive."

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ONLINE AT AFSCME.ORG



## Workers and Retirees Matter

**Stand with Detroit** if you believe in fairness for retired cops, fire fighters, librarians, bus drivers and city employees – over profits for Wall Street.

**Stand with Detroit** if you believe those who played by the rules and worked hard to serve their city for their entire lives shouldn't be the ones sacrificing the most.

Share this video on Facebook or Twitter if you **Stand with Detroit**. Visit [StandwithDetroit.org](http://StandwithDetroit.org) for this video.



## Tune in to AFSCME.TV

AFSCME.tv is our online news channel covering AFSCME members and our stories the right way. Our struggles, our victories, our union. Watch now at [AFSCME.tv](http://AFSCME.tv)

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## Coalition Building

Matt Damon. Bruce Springsteen. Danny Glover. What other famous folks stand with our labor movement? Check this exclusive online story about strength in numbers at [AFSCME.org/coalitions](http://AFSCME.org/coalitions)



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## We Are Always on Duty, We Are Always on Call



**"Ideologues don't let facts get in the way. That's why our activism is so important."**

Somewhere in our nation, an emergency room nurse just ended a double shift at the county hospital. Her shift included calming a homeless man in the throes of a psychotic episode, patching up an elderly woman who'd fallen on a city street and helping track down a relative of a runaway teen with meningitis.

In a busy state building nearby, an eligibility counselor matches desperate women and men with the resources they need to get through a rough patch. A vocational rehabilitation specialist reaches out to potential employers who will give people with disabilities an opportunity to work.

At a water treatment plant on the other side of town, a plant operator tests for chlorine and pH-levels, adjusting chemicals to keep potable water free of solids, bacteria, algae and viruses.

Miles away, a child care provider welcomes her first youngsters at 7 a.m., after spending the previous evening cutting out and hanging paper snowflakes and making sure the kids will have plenty of winter-themed books to read.

### Overworked and Undervalued

AFSCME members do these jobs and so many others. This issue of *WORKS* is dedicated to all of you.

In the pressure to get the job done, you may take the importance of your work for granted. And when politicians and tea party-inspired activists chastise you, it's easy to feel overworked and undervalued.

But you are the backbone of our society. You should be praised for what you do; instead, you're often derided. The verbal abuse from some politicians and their wealthy backers paved the way for

attacks on your pay, benefits, retirement security and bargaining rights. More often than not, these initiatives are not driven by economic conditions; they are driven by ideologues who want to lower wages and end pensions for public service workers. They want to outsource our jobs to private companies – often, companies in which they have a financial stake.

### What We Face

In 2011 and 2012, 15 state legislatures passed laws restricting public employees' bargaining rights or ability to have their union dues collected through payroll deduction. (In three states, including Ohio, those laws were later vetoed or overturned by referendum.) But a recent study by the Economic Policy Institute found these states were not necessarily those with the most pressing financial challenges.

Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker blamed public employees for imperiling the state's budget. Yet, Wisconsin is one of the few states that started 2011 with a budget surplus – until Walker enacted a huge tax cut for businesses that ran up the state's debt.

Ideologues don't let facts get in the way. That's why our activism is important.

As you read this issue, we hope no matter your job title, you see yourself in the photographs. Hold your head up high. You do our nation proud.

Lee Saunders  
President

# Low-Income Women and Their Families Pay for Others' Unfairness

It was children and single mothers who were hurt when harmful cuts known as sequestration began 10 months ago. They lost many services and assistance programs on which they rely when they already struggle to make ends meet. As a single mother who raised three children, I know how difficult it is to make do with limited income and public assistance. It gets harder by the day.

The automatic, across-the-board cuts that began in March when Congress failed to come to a budget agreement have already eliminated Head Start programs for tens of thousands of children. And tens of thousands of low-income families lost federal assistance to pay for child care. Hundreds of thousands of poor families will be left in the cold this winter because of cuts to the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

The budget deal reached in December provides some temporary relief from sequestration, but it does not invest enough in our nation. Sen. Patty Murray of Washington, a key negotiator, resisted calls to cut Social Security, Medicaid, Medicare benefits and food assistance for people with low incomes.

However, the deal doesn't help the many people who remain out of work. And at the insistence of Rep. Paul Ryan of Wisconsin, it doesn't require any sacrifices of the wealthiest 1 percent.

## Sacrificing Working Families

On top of the damage from sequestration came the government shutdown, which furloughed hundreds of thousands of federal workers, cost billions and slowed our recovery.

Its effects on non-federal employees would have been much worse had AFSCME not won a crucial initiative: We successfully lobbied to extend back pay to federally funded state, local and non-profit workers who were furloughed during the federal shutdown.

But it is unconscionable for our nation to continue lurching from crisis to crisis, sacrificing working families for the wealthy. The only solution is to make the rich pay their fair share.

## New Year's Resolution: Make the Rich Pay Their Fair Share

The wealthy are making tremendous gains, but the wages of America's middle class remained stagnant during the past 30 years. Economic inequality is at its worst in a century and threatens economic mobility and the size of the middle class.

Our nation's ongoing recovery from the 2008 Great Recession was built on the backs of working families, whose wages were cut, benefits taken away, and retirement pensions threatened. It's time that politicians in both parties ask the wealthiest in our nation to make the same sacrifices.

In 2014, AFSCME will continue to fight on behalf of working families, defend cuts to vital government programs, and call for the rich to pay their fair share. This will be our New Year's Resolution.



Laura Reyes  
Secretary-Treasurer



**"It's time that politicians in both parties ask the wealthiest in our nation to make the same sacrifices."**



**Tea-party lawmakers** in Congress undermine the middle class and make it harder for the neediest to survive. Follow along as we chart the so-called logic of just one of them: Rep. Stephen Fincher of Tennessee:

# He Said What?



"The role of citizens...of humanity, is to take care of each other. But not for Washington to steal from those in the country and give to others in the country."

—**U.S. Rep. Stephen Fincher (Tenn.)**, explaining last year why he opposes food stamps for the needy.



Ironically, **Fincher** opposes food stamps, but is fine with collecting his own share of Washington handouts. He pocketed nearly \$3.5 million in farm subsidies from 1999 to 2012, making him the "second largest recipient of farm subsidies in the United States Congress," reports *Forbes*.

# 1.3 MILLION

That's the average number of people in Fincher's state who received food stamp assistance each month in 2012. That assistance makes it possible for low-income households to feed their families. Within Fincher's own Congressional District, nearly 51,000 households received such benefits from 2009 to 2011, according to the American Community Survey.



# 47 MILLION

That's the number of Americans who benefit from the food stamp program (official name: the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). Pres. Barack Obama increased benefits under the program in his 2009 stimulus bill. The right-wing House last summer narrowly approved a bill – largely along party lines – that cut the program by approximately \$40 billion during the next 10 years. The Congressional Budget Office says that would deprive nearly 4 million people of needed food assistance.

To read more,  
visit [AFSCME.org/fyi](http://AFSCME.org/fyi)

# Power Up

**You've got the power as a PEOPLE MVP!**



**Protect your rights, wages, working conditions, and retirement security.**

For only \$2 a week, power up and help elect candidates who support working families, while holding them accountable. Help lift up all members across the country with your voluntary contribution.

Join today at [AFSCME.org/people](http://AFSCME.org/people)  
or call (202) 429-1021.



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# ORGANIZING FOR POWER

## From state to state, workers are joining AFSCME for a stronger voice on the job

### California EMS Workers Earn Contract for Better Conditions, Fair Pay

**SANTA CLARA, Calif.** — After a year of negotiating with their employer, members of United EMS Workers-AFSCME Local 4911 secured a contract in November that improves working conditions and pay, maintains benefits, protects jobs, and allows them more time off with their families.

Members voted overwhelmingly to ratify the new two-year contract with employer Rural/Metro. The contract for the EMS workers must be honored even if the company changes ownership. Members will receive, on average, checks for \$3,800, as part of a bargained retroactive pay increase.

Faced with multiple hurdles at the table,

the EMS professionals at Rural/Metro's 911 division used the power of collective action to hold the company accountable to the promise of maintaining quality emergency medical services in Santa Clara County. With safety on the line, members took a strike authorization vote to underscore their commitment to achieving a safe and fair workplace through a contract.

The result: a contract that moves EMS closer to being a safe profession, whose workers are paid fairly.

"We knew it was up to us to hold Rural/Metro accountable," said Martine Bustamante an EMT at Rural/Metro 911. "People's lives and our safety were on the line."

"Having democracy and participation at every level is what makes our union strong," said Samantha Tennison, a paramedic at Rural/Metro 911. "We've never been this united, and it made all the difference in negotiations."

Workers are also organizing with AFSCME in other states. Here is a look at some recent victories:

#### ILLINOIS

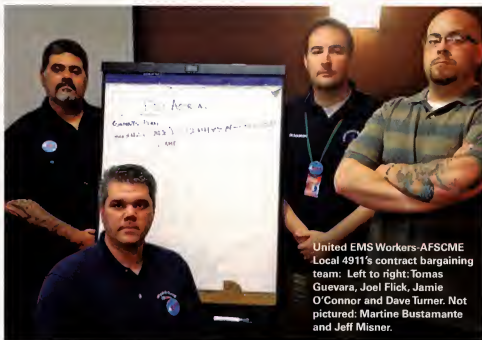
**F**our-hundred and eighty-three direct-care professionals, housekeepers and other employees of Milestone Inc., of Rockford, voted overwhelmingly to join Council 31. Milestone is a private, not-for-profit that provides residential care and developmental training services to adults and children with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

#### NEW MEXICO

**F**ifteen police officers of the city of Belén formed a union with Council 18, overcoming opposition from the chief of police.

#### NEW YORK

**O**ne-hundred and twelve LPNs, CNAs and other employees of Orchard Manor nursing home in Medina organized with Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA)/AFSCME Local 1000. They overcame an anti-union campaign marked by suspensions, terminations, and threats. Sixty-five sanitation employees of New York City's Grand Central Partnership voted overwhelmingly to join DC 37. The non-profit manages the business improvement district surrounding Grand Central Station.



United EMS Workers-AFSCME Local 4911's contract bargaining team: Left to right: Tomas Guevara, Joel Flick, Jamie O'Connor and Dave Turner. Not pictured: Martine Bustamante and Jeff Misner.



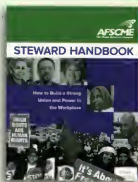
**AFSCME membership has many advantages. Check out some of the great resources available throughout the year.**

## **Hot off the Press: The AFSCME Steward Handbook**

Are you a steward or interested in becoming one? If you answered 'yes,' then you need to get our new Steward Handbook, revised for fall 2013.

In addition to learning about the steward system, you can read about laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and other important laws affecting representation of union members.

The booklet also covers AFSCME's councils, locals,



affiliates, special national bodies and AFSCME's Power to Win Plan.

Want to know about PEOPLE Power? It's all here. It even comes with a handy glossary of labor terms, useful for your next union meeting.

It's free to download and print from our website, [AFSCME.org/members/education-and-trainings](http://AFSCME.org/members/education-and-trainings). The booklet is listed under Education Tools. If your local union or chapter leadership wants to order bulk copies, contact the AFSCME General Services help desk at (202) 429-1234. Printed copies cost just \$3 each.

## **AFSCME Advantage: Helping Union Families Deal with Financial Hardship**

Do any of these situations apply to you?

- You've been laid off.
- You have trouble paying your bills.
- Large, unpaid medical bills are piling up.
- You've been disabled within the last 12 months and have been out of work more than 90 days.
- You've been financially harmed following a FEMA-declared natural disaster or emergency.

If you are a full dues-paying member and answered 'yes' to any of those questions – and you participate in the AFSCME Advantage Credit Card, Mortgage or Insurance programs – help may be available for qualified applicants. Credit card holders are eligible after three months for disability grants of \$1,600 to \$2,700, job loss grants of \$300 and hospital grants of \$1,200. There are also disaster relief grants and \$1,000 hospital grants for insurance and mortgage participants.

Eligible AFSCME Advantage Mortgage holders facing financial hardship may receive assistance in making their

mortgage payments from Union Plus. In addition, all AFSCME members can receive free budget and credit counseling and take advantage of a medical bill negotiating service.

This is what one AFSCME member had to say about the importance of the disability grant program through AFSCME Advantage:

**"You know, everyone talks about the financial strain of disability, and that's bad enough. But there is also a lot of emotional stress when you don't know where all the money is coming from. Thankfully, Union Plus was there to help us. It's given us a happier holiday season."**



—Denise Imundo of Spotswood, N.J., a psychiatric social worker at Raritan Bay Mental Health Center and president of Local 3460 (Council 73). She shares an AFSCME Advantage Credit Card with her husband, John, who went without work for four months following neck surgery. When her pay and his disability payments were not enough to cover bills, a Union Plus Assistance Disability Grant helped them get through the tough times.



**Learn more about these special benefits for AFSCME members at [AFSCME.org/advantage](http://AFSCME.org/advantage) – under 'Money & Credit,' click on 'Assistance.' Or contact AFSCME Advantage at (800) 588-0374.**



Every hour, every day, AFSCME members are making American happen.  
We've photographed public workers in action, from coast to coast,  
from morning 'til night and all the way until dawn.

By Tiffanie Bright, Cynthia McCabe and Olivia Sandbothe

Contributors: Kevin Brown, Helen Cox, Kevin Hanes, David Patterson

07:AM

**Detroit, Michigan.**  
The City of Detroit's fleet of 449 buses doesn't hit the road until inspectors, including June Nickelberry-Clark, make sure that they're ready for a long day of hauling passengers.



08:AM

**Muskogee, Oklahoma.**  
The water and sewage flowing through American communities requires constant monitoring. In Muskogee, it's done by a public service worker like Stephen Hill.



"The most fulfilling part is knowing that we're putting out a good product. The water people get here is clean."



09:AM

**Memphis, Tennessee.**  
Perhaps nowhere in the country is the act of collecting trash more infused with history than in this city, where sanitation workers like Adrian Rogers make their rounds each morning. It was in Memphis that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., stood with AFSCME to advocate for fair treatment and dignity for sanitation workers and gave his life in service to that cause.



**"It was always my dream as a child to be a sanitation worker. The citizens love us here."**

10:AM

**Newtown, Connecticut.**  
A little more than a year ago, a few minutes after 10 a.m., Newtown officers and first responders were alerted to what would be the most grim assignment of their careers, after a shooter killed 20 students and six teachers at Sandy Hook Elementary. The first responders and law enforcement of Newtown — including detectives Jason Frank, Joseph Joudy and Daniel McAnaspie — are integral to the community when tragedy strikes.







11:11 AM

**New York City,  
New York.**  
Li Jung Chan works with children as a day care provider. It's tiring work but she wouldn't have it any other way. "The children we care for are immigrants. We serve as a bridge to society."

Let's poll...



"I get to see children grow and progress – they invent themselves. I have an opportunity to help people understand this great country."

"I like working with people directly. It feels like I can make a difference in people's lives. I learn and grow from them."



11:21 PM

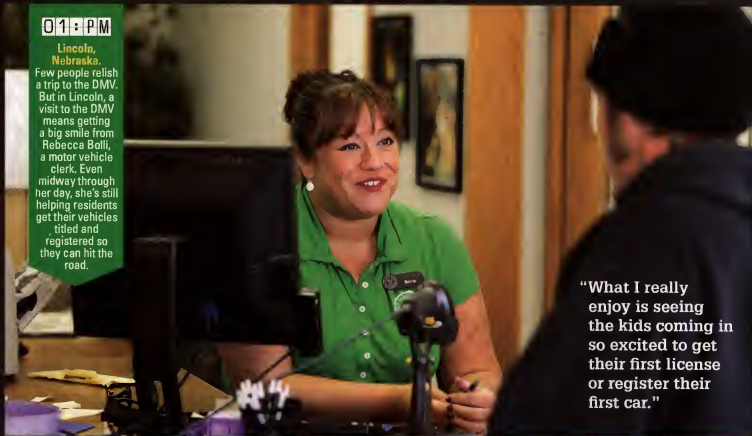
**Chaska,  
Minnesota.**  
Like nearly 250,000 AFSCME members, Becky Varone's commitment to her community continues even in retirement. The former social worker now volunteers at her local food bank and always works the polls on Election Day.



01:PM

Lincoln,  
Nebraska.

Few people relish a trip to the DMV. But in Lincoln, a visit to the DMV means getting a big smile from Rebecca Bolli, a motor vehicle clerk. Even midway through her day, she's still helping residents get their vehicles titled and registered so they can hit the road.



"What I really enjoy is seeing the kids coming in so excited to get their first license or register their first car."



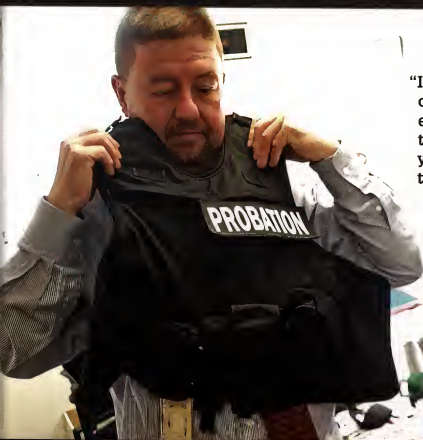
"So many kinds of people come in and we help everyone. We don't discriminate. And those people leave knowing something they didn't know when they came in."

02:PM

Indianapolis,  
Indiana.

In an age of politicians eager to cut library funding, Michael Torres serves as a reminder of everything the local library brings to its community. Starting around 2 p.m., students begin piling in to do schoolwork. That follows a morning and early afternoon of retirees coming to read the newspaper or magazines, and the unemployed using library computers to job search.



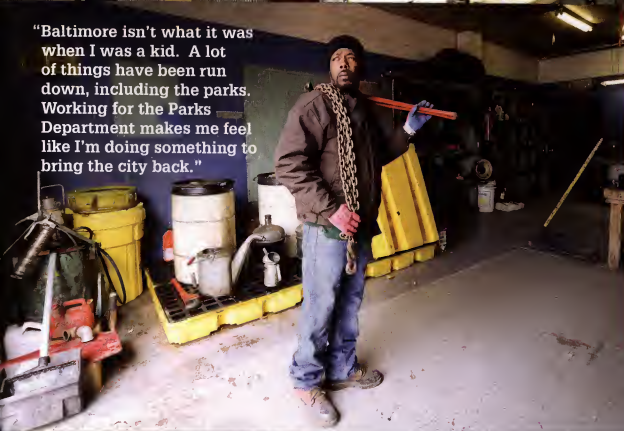


"I see my job as a hybrid of social work and law enforcement. You have to help people, but you also have to hold them accountable."

03:PM

Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Probation officer Patrick Guernsey isn't armed, so he needs the extra protection while executing his rounds, checking in on convicted criminals. In a state famous for its friendliness, is the vest really needed? "It can be dangerous, but the union has really stepped up to make sure we have safety training and equipment."



"Baltimore isn't what it was when I was a kid. A lot of things have been run down, including the parks. Working for the Parks Department makes me feel like I'm doing something to bring the city back."

04:PM

Baltimore, Maryland.

Devin Curtis has been with the Baltimore Parks Department since he started working summer jobs there in junior high. Now he's a small engine mechanic, fixing the mowers, leaf blowers, and pumps that keep the city's green spaces looking pristine. The shop steward tells us that he's happy to have a job that gives back to the city he loves.



05:PM

**Hilo, Hawaii.** Jay Hatayama is a forester. Part of his responsibility is heading in to fight an uncontrollable fire, safely clearing out Hawaii's dense forests. He keeps his cool even under the flaming hot conditions.



"When there's a wildfire, we work 'round the clock."

06:PM

**Miami, Florida.** It's dinnertime at the Miami Zoo, so zookeeper Daniella Woodell feeds cotton-top tamarins their mealworms. Throughout the day, AFSCME member zookeepers nationwide care for everything from exotic animals down to the humblest critters like groundhogs and birds. "I have to learn what motivates the animals and what will keep them healthy. It makes me get involved in a world other than my own."





07:PM

Warwick,  
Rhode Island.

Police

prosecution clerk  
Walter Hartley  
covers the office  
and procedural  
needs of the  
criminal justice  
system. He works  
by the caseload  
and not by the  
clock. "My work  
is to support  
uniformed  
officers with  
the needs and  
functions of  
the office and  
prosecutorial  
needs. I deal  
with a lot of  
DUIs and other  
alcohol-related  
offenses."



"I help keep that  
drunk driver off  
the road."

08:PM

Piscataway,  
New Jersey.

Mike Messner,  
a university

maintenance  
worker, changes  
a filter on the  
campus of Rutgers  
University. It  
takes thousands  
of workers  
to keep the  
campus open  
and humming for  
50,000 students.



"My role is to maintain  
the buildings so that kids  
can get an education.  
AFSCME members work  
hard and take pride in  
our work."



09:PM

**Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.**  
911 operator  
Michelle Anderson doesn't need tips or tricks to get herself through the night. From the moment she puts on her headset and fires up her monitoring screens, it's all adrenaline and expertise. "The calls that we get at night are true emergency calls."

"We get more emergency calls during my shift because everyone else is sleeping. If you're up, it's because something is going on."

10:PM

**Taos, New Mexico.**  
Emergency medical technician  
Wayne Jenkins, Erica Parraz, David Varela and Dewey Shields work the night shift and then some. "We're at the station whenever we're on shift. There are breaks when we're not on call, but when there's an emergency, you've got to go. It takes a day or two to recover from the sleep deprivation. But it's worth it."

"When most people are at home warm in their beds, we're out there helping people."





11:PM

**Schenectady, New York.**

It's one of the more unusual AFSCME member work environments: the off-track betting parlor.

A safe and legal place to bet on horse and greyhound races. Danny Hayes spends late evenings directing TV shows that feature jockey interviews and updates from trainers on the horses. Hayes' location generates \$3 million a year for Schenectady county.

**"That money  
our location  
generates funds  
nursing homes  
and helps the  
homeless."**



12:AM

**Akron, Ohio.**

The coroner's office never closes. Ramon Mendoza works in the laboratory as a histotechnologist, prepping tissue samples for the doctors to analyze. The setting doesn't bother Mendoza. "It's refreshing to be here when there's no one else here. I can get a lot done."





"We see children in distress. We have the power to alleviate that distress."

01:AM

**Chicago, Illinois.**

When his cell phone rings, Stephen Mittons knows it's time to go help a child. He's a child protection specialist, heading out at all hours to help the children in the city find safe environments to spend the night. "I'm the frontline. Knocking on the doors. We have the authority to remove children right on the spot. In 15 years, I've rarely had to call the police. It's our reputation across the state that gives us that authority."

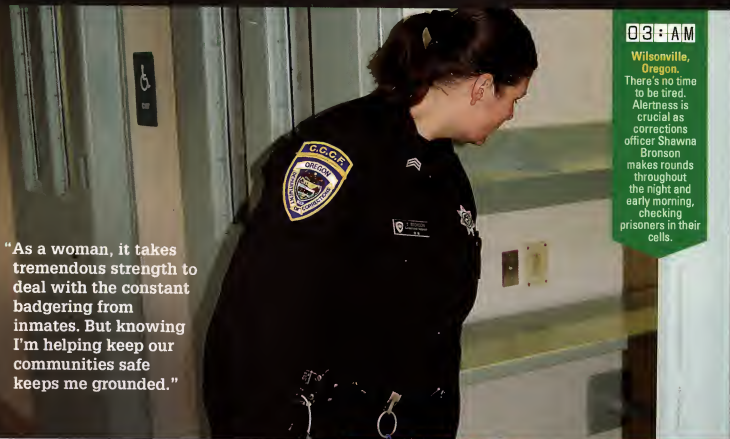


02:AM

**Fontana, California.**

The nurses at Kaiser Fontana Medical Center run at full speed through overnight shifts. For the patients who are at a hospital overnight, the confident care and bedside manner of nurses like Teresita Cagandahan, RN, and Kiran Ball Patel, RNCH, can ease recovery.





"As a woman, it takes tremendous strength to deal with the constant badgering from inmates. But knowing I'm helping keep our communities safe keeps me grounded."

03:AM

**Wilsonville, Oregon.**  
There's no time to be tired. Alertness is crucial as corrections officer Shawna Bronson makes rounds throughout the night and early morning, checking prisoners in their cells.



"This program is not a luxury, it's a necessity. It allows our loved ones to have dignity. Our elders already did for us, and it's time for us to do for them."

04:AM

**Bakersfield, California.**  
Julie Otero starts work at 3 a.m., helping to dress and feed her mother for an early dialysis appointment. Otero is a home care provider through California's In-Home Supportive Services program. "Having them in a home environment saves lives."

## THE 1 PERCENT BUNCH:

# They Help the Wealthy Dodge Their Fair Share

**Cities and states are taking drastic measures to get out of an economic slump, including turning to reverse Robin Hoods who target America's middle class.**

BY PABLO ROS

Whether you're a city worker in Detroit or a state employee in Rhode Island, public workers across the nation have much more in common with each other than they did just a few years ago.

We face vicious and well-funded attacks from special interests that demonize us as though it was our greed and lavish lifestyles, rather than Wall Street's, that caused the 2008 economic crisis.

Nothing could be more ridiculous.

AFSCME successfully fended some of these attacks. In

Cincinnati, for example, voters in November resoundingly rejected a tea party-backed measure that would have decimated public worker pensions by turning them into 401(k)-style plans.

Leaders and members of the six AFSCME Council 8 local unions representing Cincinnati city employees mobilized, held emergency meetings with the public, and completed neighborhood walks aimed at educating voters.

But in other places the fight goes on and the outcome is uncertain. Politicians facing decades of underfunded pensions are now shifting blame and responsibility unfairly to workers. They're getting plenty of help from elected (and unelected) public officials. The result: America's middle class is under attack.

### Roads that Lead to the Same Place

In some places, like Detroit, corporate-backed politicians are making drastic cuts to workers' and retirees' pensions and falsely claiming there is no alternative to bankruptcy.

In December, a federal judge ruled Detroit's bankruptcy legal, dealing a devastating blow to the retirement security of the city's public service workers.

While it's true the city's finances were in bad shape, Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder specifically went after public employee pensions, in blatant disregard of the explicit language of the constitution he swore to uphold and protect. His politically appointed so-called "emergency manager," Kevyn Orr, refused to meet with AFSCME or any other labor unions to work together and try to minimize the harm inflicted on city workers and their families

— a fact the judge acknowledged.

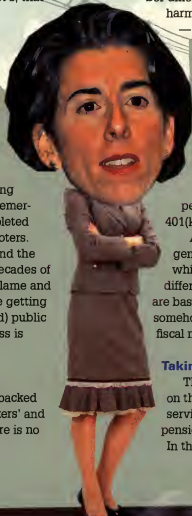
In Rhode Island, the newly elected general treasurer, Gina Raimondo, chose a different path but with negative consequences that similarly threaten the retirement security of state employees.

In late 2011, Raimondo guided passage of the Retirement Security Act, which raised the minimum age for retirement, took away cost-of-living-adjustment increases, and removed the safety of pensions by partly replacing them with risky 401(k)-style plans, among other things.

Although on the surface these two divergent paths — bankruptcy and pension "reform," which is more like pension theft — are very different, they have something in common: They are based on the monumental misconception that somehow public employees are to blame for our fiscal mess and should be made to pay.

### Taking Advantage of the Weak

The Great Recession took its greatest toll on those already vulnerable, like Detroit public service workers and retirees. AFSCME retiree pensions in Detroit are only about \$19,000 a year. In the last few years, Wall Street fat cats have



managed to recover their losses impressively quickly while working families continue to lag behind.

And yet instead of helping those who remain most vulnerable, politicians like Raimondo and Snyder are helping the rich get richer by funneling public funds in their direction.

As part of her plan to help the wealthy, Raimondo began investing taxpayer money in hedge funds, which are riskier and more expensive "alternative investments" with no guarantee of higher returns.

Raimondo is a former venture capitalist. She was elected in 2010 thanks to contributions from hedge funds who knew they stood to benefit by putting her in office.

And they were right. Over the next 20 years, taxpayers in Rhode Island will have to pay more than \$2 billion dollars in fees alone to Wall Street hedge funds. During the same period of time, state employees will have to go without cost-of-living-adjustments that add up to the same amount of money.

In other words, Raimondo is a reverse Robin Hood taking from the poor to give to the rich.

AFSCME Council 94 called on the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to investigate Raimondo's apparently illegal investment practices after releasing a damning report titled, "Rhode Island Public Pension Reform: Wall Street's License to Steal."

"The treasurer has emerged as the leading national advocate of a disingenuous form of public pension 'reform,' which involves slashing workers' benefits and thwarting public access to information regarding the riskiest of pension investments while, in secret, dramatically increasing the risks to retirement plans and the fees they pay to Wall Street," the report states.

J. Michael Downey, president of AFSCME Council 94, said, "Instead of promoting retirement security for all Rhode Islanders, the changes in the state's public pension apparently enriched wealthy hedge fund managers from out of state."

In November, Frank Ciccone, a Rhode Island state senator,

Rhode Island General Treas. Gina Raimondo is a former venture capitalist, as is Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder. Detroit emergency manager Kevyn Orr's former law firm stands to rake in millions from bankruptcy proceedings he's overseeing for the city.

echoed AFSCME by asking the SEC to look into "misleading information" found in official documents regarding the state's investments. He referenced the AFSCME report and said the SEC should look into any possible violations of the law.

### The Rich Must Pay Their Fair Share

Similarly, in Detroit, the former law firm of Kevyn Orr, the emergency manager, stands to gain millions of dollars in fees from the city's bankruptcy proceedings. And Wall Street banks and firms are eager to find out how they might split up the city's remaining assets to further enrich themselves, perched like vultures above a once-thriving American metropolis.

The road that nobody except unions and their allies had the courage to travel is that of calling on local and state governments, as well as the federal government, to raise taxes on the wealthy so they, too, can make sacrifices on behalf of our country.

The Great Recession of 2008 was caused by Wall Street's reckless behavior, and it's Wall Street who must pay.

Send comments to [pros@afscme.org](mailto:pros@afscme.org)



## ESSENTIAL EXPENSES:

# Student Loan, Rent, Political Contribution

Faced with bills and limited budgets, AFSCME's youngest members of the Next Wave prioritize political activism through PEOPLE.

BY PABLO ROS

To unwind, Brooks Salazar, 31, tries to stay active – he enjoys biking, playing rugby or going for a run in the park. The Seattle resident and vice president of Local 304 (Council 28) has a lot on his mind these days. To name one thing: “I’m freaking out about how to pay for college when my daughter gets there,” he says, referring to his 3-year-old daughter Lilly.

And Salazar is concerned about another young generation: the young American public service workers represented by AFSCME’s NextWave program, of which he is a member.

Salazar, a legal secretary for a state administrative court, makes a modest salary that he estimates is 40 percent below the compensation rate for a person holding a

similar job in the private sector. He went into public service for the same reason many AFSCME

members do – because serving our communities is still a job that we can be proud of.

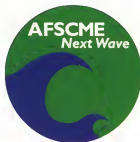
But Salazar says state employees are demonized by politicians motivated by partisan ideology. Each month he contributes to PEOPLE,

AFSCME’s political action committee, to help elect candidates who have workers in mind.

“We are well educated and hard-working,” Salazar says of public service workers. He wants candidates who understand that and fight for the public services we provide.

For those who are new to the union, in their 20s and 30s, the challenges facing our union are in many ways unprecedented. Ever since the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 2010 that corporations could spend unlimited amounts of money on political candidates, the role of money in politics became outsized.

Salazar recognizes this situation is not ideal, but he is realistic enough to face it head on. “Money is the only way to talk in the current political system,” he says.



### A Little Goes a Long Way

Many of AFSCME’s Next Wavers are just beginning their careers. They are engaged to be married or starting families, and many of them, like Jasmine Rezendes, 25, are paying off hefty college loans.

Rezendes, who works for the Rhode Island Department of Education and is a member of Local 2872 (Council 94) has \$45,000

in college loans left to pay. After graduating from college, she went back home to live with her parents temporarily.

“I lived with them for a little over a year and they helped me get on my feet,” she says. “They provided me the opportunity to live rent-free and start my nest egg



Jasmine Rezendes



Brooks Salazar







Grace Baltich

**"Certainly when you live paycheck to paycheck it's hard to do anything. But for me donating to PEOPLE is a priority. I make it a priority because I know how important it is."**

— Grace Baltich

until I was ready to take my next steps in life."

After all her bills are paid, Rezendes says, she has "a couple of hundred dollars left that get put toward savings."

Recently, she began donating to AFSCME's PEOPLE program, at the MVP level—that's a minimum of just \$2 a week—after a union sister approached her. "All she had to say was that this was going to help us fight the wrong politicians, and I said: 'Yes, I'll do it,'" says Rezendes.

In Rhode Island, the importance of electing candidates who stand with workers, regardless of political party, has never been more clear. Gina Raimondo was elected general treasurer in 2010 and immediately began attacking the pensions of workers there (see p22 for more). Rezendes demands better for her fellow workers. She does it with her PEOPLE dollars every month.

## Encouraging Others to Do the Same

Leah Jones, a corrections officer at the Ohio Reformatory for Women in Marysville, is a NextWaver with a mission to sign up everyone she can in her union's PEOPLE program. For her, it's personal.

Jones became an activist for Ohio Civil Service Employees

Association (OCSEA)/AFSCME Local 11 after her chapter fought with her when she became pregnant in 2005 and 2008. OCSEA filed grievances that kept her from having to work among the most violent inmates while pregnant. "I didn't want to risk my children," she said.

**"I'm the next generation of the union, and we have to protect our jobs."**

— Leah Jones



Leah Jones

After winning, she became a steward "and I've been getting even more active in last two years," she said. That includes supporting PEOPLE.

"I'm the next generation of the union, and we have to protect our jobs," she said. With anti-worker legislation looming, PEOPLE is critical. "It protects our jobs and it protects our union."

## Taking One More Step

Grace Baltich, 36, was already a PEOPLE MVP contributor. But when she was elected president of Minnesota Council 65 in 2012, she decided to take the next step and become a "1 percenter"—donating 1 percent of her salary to PEOPLE.

She's doing this, even as she prepares to welcome a baby boy. A growing family is an expensive proposition, but Baltich says it's important to her to donate 1 percent of the salary she earns as a social worker to PEOPLE.

"Certainly when you live paycheck to paycheck it's hard to do anything," she says. "But for me donating to PEOPLE is a priority. I make it a priority because I know how important it is."

Like other NextWavers, Baltich knows how much public workers' contracts are affected by who gets elected to office. Contributing to our union's PEOPLE fund is an investment in the future, driven by the belief that better days are yet ahead for public employees in our nation.

*Send comments to [pros@afscme.org](mailto:pros@afscme.org)*



**If you'd like to donate to AFSCME PEOPLE, go to [AFSCME.org/members/afscme-people](http://AFSCME.org/members/afscme-people). It only takes \$2 a week to be a PEOPLE MVP.**

## Our Fight for Rights and Respect Continues

BY KYLE WEIDLEMAN

The fight for workplace rights often takes AFSCME to the state and local governments that make the laws with the greatest impact on working families. While AFSCME stayed vigilant in 2013, we face challenges in state capitols and city halls in this year's legislative sessions and the November mid-term elections.

### Attacks on Retirement Security



Illinois lawmakers recently passed legislation that would gut the pensions of both active and retired public employees. The measure is effectively a \$100 million cash grab from past and present public service workers that raises the retirement age up to five years for many state workers and scales back the size of and even skips some annual cost-of-living increases for retirees. The AFSCME Council 31-led We Are One Illinois coalition vowed to challenge the measure in court.

Meanwhile, California lawmakers consider whether or not to strike a blow against public workers' retirement security by dramatically changing the public pension system. Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett's plan to "fix" the two largest public sector retirement systems shifts investment risks to public workers by moving them

to a 401(k)-style defined contribution plan from the current defined benefit pension plan.

### Voting Rights



AFSCME members and our progressive allies face a two-pronged attack on our fundamental voting rights in Montana. The same forces that attack AFSCME members' rights at the workplace are bankrolling two ballot initiatives attacking voters' rights. The first initiative would end same-day voter registration for Montana residents, which would disproportionately affect student, working-class, elderly and infirm voters. The second measure would create a "top two" open primary that would silence the voices of voters across a state with a proud tradition of third party candidacies.

## The extreme anti-worker forces may be biding their time in 2014 so they can push their agenda in the 2015 legislative session.

Wisconsin state lawmakers allied with the notorious Gov. Scott Walker targeted voting rights as they wrap up 2013 and head into the midterm elections. The state Legislature implemented the state's new voter ID laws, by circumventing a court order, while the constitutionality of the law remains in doubt. Walker and his legislative lackeys also push new limits on in-person absentee voting and drastic changes to

rules regarding the recall of state elected officials.

AFSCME leads the fight to overturn an extreme voter suppression law passed by the Arizona state Legislature earlier this year. Protect Your Right to Vote, the coalition group that collected and submitted 146,000 signatures (far surpassing the 86,405 necessary to get a citizens' veto on the ballot) is now focused on defeating the law in the November statewide election. Attorney General Tom Horne poured fuel on the democratic flame when he ruled that Arizona residents who register to vote using the federal registration form would not be eligible to vote in state and local elections — effectively creating a two-tiered voting system. Thanks to the hard work of AFSCME members and our allies in the Protect Your Right to Vote coalition, the voter suppression law was suspended until the 2014 vote.

Not all of the ballot measures in 2014 are bad news. The Connecticut state Legislature referred a constitutional amend-

### Other Anti-Worker Attacks



Although AFSCME fought in 2012 to defeat paycheck deception in California, Prop 32 rears its ugly head again in the Golden State. The same anti-worker forces who organized the anti-worker ballot initiative in 2012 are looking for a rematch in this year's mid-term elections.

A Michigan ballot measure that would disproportionately put the state tax burden on working families and give a payday to big business was bankrolled by those corporate interests. The ballot measure was referred to the ballot by anti-worker, anti-tax lawmakers in the state Legislature and was placed on the ballot for the Aug. 5 primaries — which are likely to attract fewer and more extreme voters than the November general election.

Following the 2010 mid-term elections that saw anti-worker lawmakers and governors taking the reins of state governments across the country, AFSCME was

aggressive in our fight to protect workers' rights. Although we suffered some state-level legislative losses, AFSCME and our allies successfully defended working families in other state fights. The extreme anti-worker forces may be biding their time in 2014 so they can push their agenda in the 2015 legislative session, but AFSCME will fight back at the ballot box and in the courts to make sure they do not succeed.

Send comments to [kweideman@afscme.org](mailto:kweideman@afscme.org)



## SACRAMENTO CALIFORNIA

### Domestic Workers Win Seven-Year Battle for Workplace Rights

California's domestic workers — housekeepers, child care providers, and in-home caregivers — won a seven-year fight for labor protections last fall when Gov. Jerry Brown signed the Domestic Worker Bill of Rights into law.

The law brings new workplace protections to the estimated 360,000 household domestic workers in the Golden State. Domestic workers are now only required to work nine hours a day and 45 hours a week. More than that requires time-and-a-half overtime pay.

Although the law excludes home care workers who are paid through the state's In-Home Supportive Services program (IHSS), UDW/Homeworkers/AFSCME Local 3930 — made up of more than 65,000 IHSS caregivers — supported the bill for the home care workers who lack the workplace protections that UDW/AFSCME members have.

"This is a victory for domestic workers in California," said UDW Exec. Dir. Doug Moore (also an AFSCME International vice president), "we applaud the efforts of our brothers and sisters in their fight for these necessary protections."

UDW Pres. and IHSS caregiver Editha Adams agreed. "Caregivers and other domestic workers are overwhelmingly



UDW/AFSCME Local 3930 Exec. Dir. and AFSCME International Vice Pres. Doug Moore spoke at a press conference in support of the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights.

women and people of color, and working for very low wages," she said. "It is critical that we support each other and celebrate each other's successes."

AFSCME and our progressive allies pushed for domestic workers' rights, even after Governor Brown vetoed a similar bill in 2012. California domestic workers will continue to lead the fight for their rights including eight hours of uninterrupted sleep in "adequate, decent, and sanitary" accommodations for live-in workers. They also want meal and rest break rights and paid days of rest after working a full year. Those protections were stripped from the new law before Brown received it.

California is the third state to pass a domestic workers' rights law (after New York and Hawaii). The law took effect Jan. 1.

## ENID OKLAHOMA

### AFSCME Members Win Back Collective Bargaining Rights

Residents of this small town in the heart of the conservative southwest voted in November to restore collective bargaining rights to city employees — a dramatic victory that put an exclamation point on their

nearly 10-year campaign.

City employees gained the right to collectively bargain in 2004 but lost it in 2011, when Gov. Mary Fallin took it away.

Members of Local 1136 spent the summer gathering signatures and getting an amendment to the city charter placed on the ballot. They showed their neighbors how the union fought for safer working conditions, a fair working environment, better efficiency and accountability. By walking door-to-door and calling their neighbors, they were able to secure the votes they needed to win.

The International Association of Fire Fighters, International Association of Machinists, Fraternal Order of Police and American Postal Workers Union stood

shoulder to shoulder with Enid city workers in the fight to regain their rights.

The election marks the first time unions coordinated their activities with such laser focus. Now, local union members are staying better connected than ever before.

Since July, Enid City workers have been without a contract. Now, they can return to the bargaining table.

"It's going to allow us to bargain with the city management over working conditions, give us a voice in the workplace, a voice for the citizens of Enid," said Local 1136 Pres. Joey Breeze. "We're out every day talking to them, hearing their concerns. It allows us to go back to management and say what citizens are saying and would like to see."

# AFSCME

## ACROSS AMERICA

COLUMBUS OHIO

### Public Safety Officers Gather for Conference

More than 350 corrections officers and sworn law-enforcement personnel from across the nation came together in Columbus for the AFSCME Public Safety Congress, where they honored the fallen and pushed for safer working conditions for all public safety officers.

Among the attendees were members of the Newtown (Conn.) Police Union, Local 3153, who received the 2013 Law Enforcement Award for their response to the December 2012 massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown. Scott Rusczyk, president of Local 3153, accepted the award and spoke about the role officers played responding to the shooting.

Members of the Lucasville Corrections Facility in Ohio received the 2013 Corrections Award in recognition of their role quelling a deadly riot nearly two decades ago that claimed the life of OCSEA member Robert Vallandingham.

At the event, Pres. Lee Saunders announced the donation of \$100,000 to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund. "Our National Law Enforcement Memorial in Washington, DC, serves to remind everyone — every tourist, every family, every resident who ever called for help — of the ultimate sacrifice that too many of our public safety officers



Members of the Iowa Council 61 delegation pose with AFSCME Pres. Lee Saunders.

make every year," Saunders said.

Throughout the conference, participants strategized on the common issues their locals confront, such as funding cuts to state prisons and politicians who cater to big businesses at the expense of public workers. Mike Fraise, a member of AFSCME Local 2989, Council 61, who works in the Iowa State Penitentiary, said Gov. Terry Branstad "is trying to cut staffing to save money."

Judy Kuschel, a community corrections officer in Washington state and member of Council 28, said she was drawn to the event by the educational opportunities offered. "It's a great place to get more ideas from other people around the country of how they do their jobs, and the kind of training they get," she said.

MIAMI FLORIDA

### Tough and Prepared, Local Blocks Outsourcing Scheme

When the members of a South Florida AFSCME local fought an outsourcing scheme, they were prepared and unified. Then they won.

Members of Local 1184 (Council 79), representing employees of the Miami-Dade School District, persuaded the school board to vote last fall against a proposal for an outsourcing study. It could have led to turning the district's fleet of 1,300 buses and approximately 1,700 drivers and aides over to a for-profit operator.

Sherman Henry, the local's president, said they mounted an offense based on work they did to prevent an

outsourcing effort in 2008.

At that time, he said, "we convened a study that showed that our internal forces are more efficient and effective than the private sector," including costs and safety. For instance, they implemented a driver safety plan that subjects drivers to higher standards than those in the private sector. "The point," said Henry, "was to show that we're better for the taxpayer."

Shortly before the board voted on the outsourcing scheme, members held well-attended rallies throughout the county. They made their case through the news media and also called their board members. They also reminded the board of the earlier studies demonstrating that public service workers could do the work better and less costly than privateers.

One example was \$2 million saved by persuading administrators to switch from a poor grade of floor wax that had to be frequently re-applied to one that cost more upfront, but required fewer applications. That, and other examples of efficient and cost-effectiveness, "is what helped us get the eight to one vote" against the outsourcing scheme, said Henry.

## JERSEY CITY NEW JERSEY

### Big Win Against School Outsourcing

The Jersey City School District had a plan to outsource the schools' security guards. It was misguided and would jeopardize student safety. So AFSCME members got to work and they won.

Members of Local 2262 and Council 52 joined parents and community leaders to take their fight to the school board last fall. They raised the community's awareness about the shortfalls of the proposed for-profit outfit that would be responsible for protecting Jersey City's children.

"Using research we conducted with our national union, we stood against outsourcing here in our schools – letting the school board know that the company they wanted to hire had a history of bad decision making," said Bill Murawski, AFSCME Local 2262 president. "We exposed count-

less infractions and safety concerns from their other clients."

Realizing the effect a protracted, negative campaign would have on the company's reputation and bottom line, they withdrew their proposal to take over the school district's security. But, not before making one more very bad and very public decision.

"On Sept. 12, in the shadow of the new World Trade Center, the company went into one of our schools with an armed man to test existing security measures," said Rich Gollin, AFSCME Council 52's executive director. "They did not alert anyone that they were coming in – including the police – and they caused undue concern for students, staff and parents."

## CUSTER SOUTH DAKOTA

### Workers Fight for Respect on the Job Through AFSCME

For a group of Public Works employees of the City of Custer, the decision to gain a voice on the job with AFSCME was motivated by an injustice: An employee was fired simply for speaking his mind at a City Council meeting.

"In South Dakota, we believe in the United States constitution and civil rights," said John Dumire, a waste water operator in the city's Public Works Department. "When we began losing those rights in the workplace we decided to join AFSCME to preserve the freedoms that every employee should have at work."

Knowing the solid reputation of AFSCME's Rapid City Local 1031 (Council 59), seven employees contacted the union last winter to discuss joining. The termination of a maintenance operator a few months earlier

was their immediate motivation. They wanted the protections a union contract could provide.

The employees signed cards stating their desire to join AFSCME. But the city balked at recognizing their union. Through mediation with a state agency, an election was held last summer and the group was finally recognized.

Their goal now is to gain the respect due all public service workers in America. That means a contractual guarantee that management cannot fire them for voicing an opinion – even when it differs with those of an elected official. They also want discipline rules that protect their rights, and good wages and benefits so they can raise their families and look forward to a decent retirement.

## SAN FRANCISCO CALIFORNIA

### In Memoriam: Chris Sheppard and Laurence Daniels



Chris Sheppard

AFSCME and the Bay Area mourn the loss of Chris Sheppard, a member of Local 3993 (Council 57), and Laurence Daniels, a BART contractor.

The two men were killed after being hit by a train in the midst of last fall's difficult contract negotiations between Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) and Local 3993.

The fatalities occurred during the second day of a strike by employees of SEIU 1021 and ATU 1555. While AFSCME Local 3993 did not declare a strike, they encouraged their members to honor the picket lines while they continued negotiations with BART.

"Our hearts go out to the families of both workers as well

as to the person operating the train," said Patricia Schuchardt, president of the local. "This is a tragedy."

Schuchardt added, "We are saddened and outraged to learn that the train was possibly operated by management personnel."

This, despite repeated warnings by BART unions to top management and the board of directors about the danger of inexperienced personnel running the system in the event of a strike.

Since the tragedy occurred, the National Transportation Safety Board launched an investigation into the fatalities.

SEIU and ATU reached an agreement with BART bringing an end to the Bay Area strike. Local 3993 reached an agreement later.

Sheppard is survived by his wife and two children.

**More information about contributing to the victim's family is available at [AFSCME3993.org](http://AFSCME3993.org).**

# AFSCME

## ACROSS AMERICA

NEW YORK CITY NEW YORK

### City Agrees to Hire More 911 Operators to Address Inadequate Staff Levels

Responding to pressure from District Council 37, the city and the New York Police Department agreed last fall to hire 150 new emergency 911 operators.

The hiring came after the Police Communications Technicians (PCTs) — members of Local 1549 (DC 37) — suffered months of mandatory excessive overtime. It happened as the department prepared to launch its new emergency dispatch system, which broke down several times after going online.

As the technicians coped with double shifts, stress, insufficient sleep and time away from their loved ones, DC 37 and members of Local 1549 campaigned to raise public awareness and press the city to hire additional workers. The campaign included outreach to City Council members, appearances at budget hearings, leafleting, and working with the media to focus attention on the issue.

"We made a strong case about how the staffing shortage is harming the health and morale of our members and putting public safety at risk," said Local 1549 Pres. Eddie Rodríguez, also president of DC 37 and an AFSCME International vice president. "We are happy the city and the NYPD finally started to hear our message."



DC 37 and Local 1549 Pres. Eddie Rodríguez (also an AFSCME International vice president) spoke at a City Hall news conference last year to call attention to overtime at the New York City Police Department, caused by understaffing.

The hiring breakthrough came after DC 37 Exec. Dir. Lillian Roberts, also an AFSCME International vice president, and other union leaders and representatives met with Deputy Mayor Casswell F. Holloway III, Labor Commissioner James F. Hanley and top police brass.

"This is an important move, and we will continue our campaign for proper staffing," added Local 1549 Exec. Vice Pres. Alma Roper. "The excessive overtime drove our members to the breaking point and made a tragedy seem inevitable."

"The decision to hire acknowledges the understaffing and excessive overtime were unsustainable," said Henry Gamido, associate director of DC 37. "We will work with management on the civil service hiring process and we will remain vigilant about the situation to protect public safety and the health of our members."

SEATTLE

WASHINGTON

### Young Workers Advocate for a Fair Living Wage

Still inspired by an energetic 2013 AFSCME Next Wave conference held last summer in Detroit, the young members of the Washington Federation of State Employees (WFSE) Next Wave committee headed into their own convention determined to do more as young workers and activists.

At WFSE's 2013 Biennial Convention in

October, they committed to increase young member participation in the union and to support the union's goal of coalition building — expanding their own list of allies beyond Washington State to the greater Northwestern Region.

"Our main goals are growth," said Brandon Anderson, WFSE organizer and Next Wave Committee leader, when asked about their next steps. "We want to increase participation throughout the state and get young AFSCME members involved." Throughout the convention, Next Wa-



Proposition 1 was approved in the Nov. 5 election.

vers flooded the convention halls, urging young workers and delegates to join their rally supporting Proposition 1, a measure voters approved in November that requires Seattle-Tacoma hospitality and transportation employers to raise their hourly minimum wage to \$15, adjusted annually for inflation.

In a protest organized by the WFSE Next Wave committee, workers demonstrated at the headquarters of Alaska Airlines, which tried to keep the measure off the ballot.

## BURLINGTON VERMONT

# AFSCME Home Care Providers Gather for First National Conference

Home care providers from across the country gathered in Burlington in November for the first-ever AFSCME National Home Care Provider Conference.

The event came less than a month after 7,500 Vermont home care providers joined AFSCME in what was the largest organizing victory in the nation in 2013. It was also the largest in the state's history.

"It was exciting to meet home care workers from other states in various stages of forming their unions and negotiating," said provider Heather Boyd from Shelburne, Vt. "It was an opportunity to exchange experiences and ideas, and it gave me a broader perspective on my work."

The conference focused on building skills and networking. Providers engaged with peers facing similar experiences and challenges. They also attended workshops covering everything from First Aid training to trends in state laws affecting providers and the consumers of their services.

During the conference, dozens of providers partnered

with their local counterparts to launch a membership drive for AFSCME Vermont Homecare United. Within hours, teams of home care workers knocked on 179 doors and signed up 67 percent of those they contacted.

Attendees also joined students and community members at a rally supporting local college custodians fighting to win their first AFSCME contract.



Home care provider Barbara Young goes door knocking during the convention to sign up new members for the Vermont home care union.

## AFSCME's Political Rebate Procedure

Article IX, Section 14, of the AFSCME International Constitution includes a rebate procedure for members who object to the expenditure of union funds for partisan political or ideological purposes.

The rebate is not available to those who are members under a union shop or similar provision — or to non-members who pay agency shop or similar fees to the union.

The timing of the rebate procedure is tied to the International's recent fiscal year, which ended December 31. The procedures, including the requirements for submitting a proper rebate request, were adopted by delegates to the International Convention and are spelled out in Article IX, Section 14, of the International Constitution and summarized below. THESE REQUIREMENTS ARE STRICTLY ENFORCED.

Eligible members who object to the expenditure of a portion of their dues for partisan political or ideological purposes and want to request a rebate must do so individually in

writing. Written requests must be postmarked between April 1 and April 16, 2014, and must be sent via registered or certified mail to BOTH the International Secretary-Treasurer AND the council with which the member's local is affiliated (or if no council affiliation, to the member's local union).

The request must contain the following information: the member's name, Social Security number or member number, home address, e-mail address, if available, and the AFSCME local and council number to which dues were paid during the preceding year. This information must be typed or legibly printed. The individual request must be signed by the member and sent by the individual member to: Laura Reyes, International Secretary-Treasurer, AFSCME, 1625 L St., NW, Washington, DC 20036-5687, AND to the council with which the member's local is affiliated (or if no council affiliation, to the member's local union).

Requests from more than one person may not be sent in the same envelope. Each request must be sent individually. Requests must be submitted in writing each year.

Upon receipt of a valid rebate request, an application for partisan political or ideological rebate will be sent to the objecting member.

The objecting member will be required to complete and return the application within 30 days of its issuance. The application will require the objecting member to identify those partisan political or ideological activities to which objection is being made. In determining the amount of the rebate to be paid to any member, the International Union and each subordinate body shall have the option of limiting the rebate to the member's pro-rata share of the expenses for those activities specifically identified in the application.

Any member who is dissatisfied with the amount of the rebate paid by the International Union or any subordinate body may object by filing a written appeal with the AFSCME Judicial Panel within 15 days after the rebate check has been received. Appeals should be sent to the Judicial Panel Chairperson at the AFSCME International Headquarters at the address listed above. The Judicial Panel will conduct a hearing and issue a written decision on such appeals, subject to an appeal to the full Judicial Panel. If dissatisfied with the Judicial Panel's ruling, a member can appeal to the next International Convention.





## Home Care Providers in the Crosshairs in Supreme Court Case

**A Supreme Court case threatens  
quality home care.**

**H**ome care providers made great strides in recent years by organizing and fighting for respect. This critical—and growing—profession is often undervalued, but providers across the country are finding that when they stand together as a union, they can achieve progress. Improvements in wages, benefits and training through agreements with state governments have made it easier to recruit and retain home care workers. This translates into the vastly improved quality of care for seniors and those with disabilities, and allows them to remain in their homes and live with dignity, instead of being forced into institutionalized care.

And millions more seniors will want and seek home care assistance in the coming years. Continuing to build a trained and stable workforce of home care providers will be vital to meet this demand.

Unfortunately, a case pending right now before the Supreme Court has the potential to risk the ability of seniors and the disabled to get quality care. The case is called *Harris v. Quinn*. A ruling from the Supreme Court that says home care providers cannot collectively

bargain jeopardizes the ability of seniors and people with disabilities to get the reliable care they need to remain at home. The court is expected to decide the case early this summer.

**What it is:** The case originated in Illinois. It argues that home care providers should not be allowed to engage in collective bargaining. Every court that has already heard this case ruled it lacks merit and dismissed it.

**Who's behind it:** The case is brought by the National Right to Work Committee, a group funded by the Koch brothers and other billionaires. The committee spent decades trying to gut laws protecting workers across the country.

**How the Supreme Court should rule:** Other courts pointed out the Supreme Court rejected the arguments made by Right to Work back in 1977, and in two other cases since then. The Supreme Court is called on to follow its past reasoning and cases and to do what other courts did—dismiss this case as being without any merit.

Home care providers deserve a voice, and we will continue to speak out for our rights at work and to improve the lives of those who call on home care providers to assist them. We will keep you updated as the case develops.

—Olivia Sandbothe



**Stay up to date on this  
potentially devastating  
case at [AFSCME.org/  
blog](http://AFSCME.org/blog).**